

Abstract

The Relation Between Facial Similarity of Long-Term Couples and Overall and Sexual Satisfaction in the Relationship

Results suggest that people tend to choose a partner based on the theory of positive assortative mating (Penton-Voak et al., 1999b). According to this theory, individuals prefer partners with physical and mental characteristics similar to theirs. Preference for facial similarities among partners was confirmed in some studies (Hinsz, 1989; Bereczkei et al., 2004). Other studies suggest that facial resemblance evokes a feeling of familiarity and confidence, but excludes mutual attraction (De Bruine, 2004). The aim of this study was to determine whether facial similarity of long-term partners is related to the overall and sexual satisfaction in the relationship. During the final session of cohabiting relationship research (Klapilová et al., 2006 - 2009) both members of 50 long-term couples completed questionnaires assessing their overall satisfaction (Dyadic Adjustment Scale), sexual satisfaction (Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility), and facial photographs of partners were taken. Then 80 participants judged the similarity of standardized facial photographs of long-term partners. Then, using a regression analysis and LMM analysis the relation between rated couples similarity and results of Dyadic Adjustment Scale and Hurlbert Index of Sexual Compatibility was tested. Partners were judged as more similar to each other compared to the mean rating. Findings showed that greater couple similarity ranking indicates higher overall and sexual satisfaction for women. For men it is vice versa, thus greater similarity ranking indicates the lower overall and sexual satisfaction in a relationship. Different effect of couple's facial similarity on the overall and sexual satisfaction of men and women is discussed.

Keywords: couples similarity, sexual satisfaction, relationship satisfaction